

Vietnam

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PAGE 1-5

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Tunney Report

Rep. John V. Tunney charged yesterday that optimistic reports on the pacification program in South Vietnam are based on faulty information and are misleading the American people and its leaders.

"Virtually no place in South Vietnam is secure if the Vietcong want to attack," said the California Democrat in a report to the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

"I believe we can't win a military victory at the price the American people are willing to pay," he said.

Tunney recommended that current hamlet evaluation system be scrapped as a method of determining how secure South Vietnamese control is. Tunney visited Vietnam last May.

Congressman Disputes U.S. on Pacification Gain

By HEDRICK SMITH
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—A California Congressman today challenged the reliability of official American claims that 73 per cent of the South Vietnamese people are living under Government control.

"These are the same kind of optimistic statistics we were receiving a year ago, just before the catastrophic Tet offensive occurred," Representative John V. Tunney, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, charged.

In a special study distributed by the committee, Mr. Tunney declared that the American system for measuring progress in pacifying—or gaining control—of the South Vietnamese countryside was highly misleading and full of glaring defects.

Too Much Uncritical Faith

After a field trip to South Vietnam last May to investigate the so-called hamlet evaluation system, Mr. Tunney said that "it is difficult to understand how our officials could have put so much uncritical faith in it, in the face of opposing facts."

The findings of this system, devised in mid-1967, have been prominently cited by high Johnson Administration officials as indicators of allied progress in the Vietnam War. Middle-ranking officials, both in South Vietnam and in Washington, have been far more skeptical about the estimates for many of the reasons that Mr. Tunney cited.

Robert W. Komer, former Deputy United States Ambassador to South Vietnam in charge of the pacification program and a chief architect of the hamlet evaluation system, was widely known for his glowing estimates. Last fall, he asserted that Saigon was "definitely winning the pacification war" and that this "would help determine the shape of a settlement at Paris."

In November, 1967, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker reported that 67 per cent of the South Vietnamese population was living under the "reasonably secure protection" of the Government. Because of this estimate, Mr. Tunney contended many Americans were shocked by the force of the enemy's sweeping offensive last January and February.

But on Dec. 11, 1968, Mr.

Reliability of Methods Used to Obtain Figures in Vietnam's Countryside Challenged

Tunney noted that the Administration reported that 73.3 per cent of the South Vietnamese were living under Government control, an increase of 6.5 percentage points "in less than six weeks' time."

The Congressman challenged these "optimistic statistics" on the basis of what he termed conspicuous weaknesses in the system. Among the points he made were the following:

Only 8,650 of the 12,650 hamlets in South Vietnam are actually visited by raters because 4,000 others are under permanent Vietcong control.

American advisers are so stretched that some of the 8,650 hamlets "are not visited for as long as 12 months," meaning that evaluations are frequently months out of date. Even with more frequent visits, evaluations can be based on stopovers of no more than an hour or so.

American Advisers are under pressure not to downgrade security ratings of hamlets, both from superiors and from a desire to report favorably on the effectiveness of their own programs. Mr. Tunney said that one officer had told him that he had downgraded four hamlets after the enemy offensive last February and "was immediately hit with a barrage of cables from Saigon demanding a full explanation for downgrading them."

"For the next couple of weeks, I spent my time justifying my evaluation of the retrogression in those four hamlets," Mr. Tunney quoted the officer as having said. "During that time I wasn't doing the things I should have been doing. I believe I am an honest man, and although I hate to admit

it, it may be a long time before I downgrade another hamlet."

Only six of the 18 criteria used in evaluating hamlets were "direct measures" of Vietcong strength, but all 18 were weighted equally in the final results. Because 12 were concerned with administrative, economic and social development sponsored in the hamlets, the system is "distorted in Saigon's favor," Mr. Tunney contended, especially when American advisers had to rely for much of their information on pro-Saigon hamlet officials or interpreters.

'Garbage In, Garbage Out'

He challenged the concept that the system was authoritative because the raw data were fed into a computer to arrive at nationwide estimates. "As they say in the computer trade, 'garbage in, garbage out,'" Mr. Tunney commented, echoing the remarks of a number of civilian and military officials well acquainted with it.

The value of the system, he asserted, depends on such intangibles as the training, competence and language ability of individual American military advisers.

He concluded that the system would be useful for "some limited purpose—such as indicating changes in the effectiveness of Saigon's rural programs" and so long as its defects were taken into consideration.

"But when it is made to serve the grandiose objective of presuming to measure Saigon's political support in the countryside, it is misused and it is misused to the detriment of the American people," Mr. Tunney declared.

CURRENT NEWS

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NEW YORK TIMES 12 January 1969 P1

Experts on Vietnam Busy Drafting 'Advice' to Nixon**Diverse Plans Offered**

By WILLIAM BEECHER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11—The Nixon Administration will have no shortage of advice from members of the Johnson Administration on a possible shift in Vietnam strategy.

All over town, in the Pentagon, the State Department and even in the White House, ranking analysts have been writing "option" papers, all of them apparently unsolicited. Many of the authors are expected to continue in office during the next Administration.

The papers are being forwarded to Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, President-elect Richard M. Nixon's special assistant for national security affairs.

Senior officials who have read several of the papers say the various proposed courses of action, despite differences in detail, are remarkably similar. While the options range the spectrum from a unilateral withdrawal to a massive bombing effort against North Vietnam, the discussions focus most serious attention on various approaches to a reduction of the violence in South Vietnam and a negotiated settlement.

Well-placed sources talk of six major options in these terms:

1. The approach of maintaining maximum military pressure on the enemy in South Vietnam while attempting a favorable settlement in Paris without twisting Saigon's arm on basic compromises.

Officials say that while there are differences of opinion within the Johnson Administration, this is essentially the present Vietnam strategy, as espoused by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Ellsworth Bunker, Ambassador to Saigon, and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, United States commander in Vietnam. The strategy is keyed to the notion that with each month the strength of the Saigon regime is growing and that of the Vietcong is lessening.

2. The McGeorge Bundy option of unilaterally cutting back American force levels from the present 550,000 men to 100,000 or 150,000 men in about two

CONTINUED PAGE 2

NEW YORK TIMES
11 January 1969 P9**INQUIRY ON PUEBLO SET FOR THURSDAY**

By BERNARD WEINRAUB

Special to The New York Times

SAN DIEGO, Calif., Jan. 10—The Navy announced today that the court of inquiry into the capture of the intelligence ship Pueblo would start next Thursday in an amphitheater on the sprawling Naval Amphibious base across San Diego Bay in Coronado.

The court of inquiry is expected to deal publicly for the first time with the confused and still mysterious details surrounding the capture of the Pueblo by North Korean vessels last January.

The five-man board—composed of admirals—will also question Comdr. Lloyd M. Bucher and crewmen who issued confessions while in prison to the effect that the 906-ton ship, on her first surveillance mission, had been engaged in espionage in North Korean territorial waters.

After the crew's release two weeks ago from 11 months of captivity, Commander Bucher said that "at no time" had the Pueblo come within the 12-mile territorial waters claimed by North Korea.

Further Delay Possible

"We anticipate that the court will begin on the 16th," said Capt. Vincent C. Thomas, the public affairs officer for the commander in chief of the Pacific fleet. He indicated, however, that Commander Bucher's military or civilian attorneys could ask for a further delay in the hearings.

At a news conference at the naval hospital here, Captain Thomas said that the intelligence debriefings of Commander Bucher and the 81 other survivors of the Pueblo would be completed this week-end. The questioning this week of Commander Bucher by teams of civilian and military intelligence officers had delayed the start of the court of inquiry.

"Commander Bucher was exhausted, extremely wound up," Cmdr. E. Donald Kaufman, the chief of the medical team treat-

CONTINUED PAGE 2

NEW YORK TIMES
11 January 1969 P1**SYMINGTON JOINS IN SCORING SAIGON**

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—Senator Stuart Symington accused South Vietnam today of deliberately stalling at the Paris talks and said the United States should set a firm date for starting discussions with the North Vietnamese, "with or without the South Vietnamese."

The Missouri Democrat declared in a Senate speech that the Saigon Government was "self-centered and stubborn" and "does not appear to represent a majority of the people of that country."

Saigon is determined, he added, "to do everything possible to delay substantive negotiations designed to bring the war in Vietnam to a conclusion."

Senator Symington said that when historians write about the struggle they may well call it "the costly tragedy that was Vietnam."

Senator Symington is a member of the Foreign Relations Committee and the second-ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee. He has not been associated with the doves on Vietnam, but in the last two years his views and theirs have often been remarkably similar.

His speech today for instance echoed sharp criticism of Saigon on Dec. 17 by Senator George S. McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota. Senator Symington's comments were similar to remarks made by Secretary of Defense Clark M. Clifford in criticizing South Vietnam's delay in proceeding with substantive talks.

Senator Symington complained—as he has in the past—that the war in South Vietnam has not gone well because the American military forces "have been shackled, in a manner, and to a degree, never before known in major warfare."

Because of restrictions on United States firepower, Senator Symington said "a true victory was not in the cards."

He quoted a remark from an article by Dr. Henry Kissinger, appointed by President-elect Richard M. Nixon as a special foreign affairs assistant, that "the guerrilla wins if he does not lose." The article is in the current issue of Foreign Affairs.

CONTINUED PAGE 2

BALTIMORE SUN
12 January 1969 P1**REBELS RULE ONLY 12% NOW, SAIGON SAYS**

Saigon, Jan. 11 (P)—The number of South Vietnamese living under direct control of the Viet Cong hit record low of 12.3 per cent at the end of 1968, the United States command said today.

As of December 31, slightly fewer than 2,000,000 of the country's 17,000,000 people were recorded as living in areas that were neither secured nor contested by government forces.

Monthly Report

The monthly report on progress in pacification—the so-called "other war" in which the Saigon government seeks to wrest control of the countryside from the enemy forces—said 76.3 per cent of the people lived in areas that were relatively secure and 11.4 per cent in contested areas.

All of these figures represented high-water marks of progress under the complicated and often-criticized Hamlet Evaluation System used by American advisers to the government's pacification program.

In rural areas alone, the report said, 65 per cent of the people live in relatively secure areas, an increase of 4.3 per cent over November. Under the formula, rural areas include everything outside self-governing cities which by themselves have some 3,300,000 people.

February Setbacks

Thus the "rural" figure includes many people who live in cities that, while not autonomous, are actually urban areas broken up into villages and hamlets.

Top United States officials admitted severe setbacks to pacification from the Communist command's Tet offensive last February. But they said the program began a gradual recovery immediately after that offensive was crushed and surpassed the pre-Tet highs sometime around September. Thus each new figure since has represented record.

The number of people living under relative degrees of government protection is 9.1 per cent higher than at the end of January 1968 and 16.5 per cent higher than the after-Tet low of

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years to get into a position for a long-haul, low cost effort.

A Former White House Adviser

Such an approach was advanced by Mr. Bundy last fall in a speech at De Pauw University in Greencastle, Ind. It is based on the premise that neither the North Vietnamese nor the Vietcong will be willing to make real compromises for some time and therefore the cost of the war, both in terms of American lives and dollars, must be reduced to the point where the American public will support a long war.

Then, when the enemy finally becomes sufficiently frustrated over a seemingly endless conflict, the allies side will be in a position to work out a good settlement.

Troop-Withdrawal Plan

3. The Clark cliffdod approach of dual-track negotiations, the United States and North Vietnam attempting to negotiate mutual troop withdrawals in order to pressure Saigon and the Vietcong into a political settlement in the South.

Dr. Kissinger, in an article written for Foreign Affairs before he was named a Nixon aid, subscribed to a dual track approach.

Hanoi would be required to move its main units, together with filler troops now in Vietcong units, all the way back to North Vietnam, not merely across the borders into Laos and Cambodia. Verification of withdrawals and of an end to infiltration would be left to some international body of Asians watching the major mountain passes out of North Vietnam and making spot checks in the demilitarized zone between the two Vietnams and along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos.

A variant of this approach, in case Hanoi refuses to acknowledge publicly that it has troops in the South, would involve unannounced withdrawals.

(4) A four-party attempt to negotiate a total package settlement embracing both troop withdrawals and a final political settlement. This could involve either sharp pressure on Saigon to compromise in Paris, or on the Vietcong to agree to renounce the goal of forcibly overthrowing the Saigon regime in order to live within the terms of the South Vietnamese Constitution, taking part in the political process as individuals.

During the course of negotiations, which would be expected to be protracted, the United States could either continue current force levels and maximum military pressure in the South, or ease its burden by sending limited numbers of American units home as their places are taken by South Vietnamese units.

(5) A gradual but substantial American troop reduction, either mutually agreed on, or, if that is impossible, unilaterally. It would be much slower than under the Bundy proposal, however, being spread out over at least four or five years as the South Vietnamese armed forces become able to pick up most of the combat load.

"There is little use crying over spilled milk," Senator Symington said. "And more important than events of the past are those of the present and future."

"With that premise, however, it is also important for every American to realize how self-centered and stubborn the Government of South Vietnam has been; a Government which does not appear to represent a majority of the people of that country; a Government which nevertheless the United States, despite the heavy cost, continues to prop up."

The Senator said that North Vietnam appeared to be willing to negotiate, and that "the stumbling block" was the virtual veto by South Vietnam "of all realistic efforts to get to the conference table and commence substantive talks."

Noting disagreements in Paris over the type of table to use for negotiations, Senator Symington said North Vietnam's recent offer for a round table "was a reasonable suggestion" and should be accepted.

Both the United States and the South Vietnamese Governments have held out for a table in which "two sides" are clearly delineated, in an effort to prevent the National Liberation Front or Vietcong from being given parity with the other parties to the talks.

Senator Symington said that Saigon might hope that the Nixon Administration would be easier to negotiate with, "and therefore nothing will be lost by waiting."

"Let us hope that is not correct," he said, "because delay can only result in additional losses."

(6) A variation of the so-called Ike-Korea ploy. When Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower moved into the White House in 1953, word was quietly passed to Communist China through Indian diplomats that the new Administration was considering using nuclear weapons if the Korean War could not be settled soon through negotiations. A truce agreement was reached about five months later.

Applied to Vietnam this approach would involve letting word "leak" to Hanoi that the Nixon Administration was opening serious discussions on such possible military moves as a resumption of the bombing with focus on major military targets rather than trucks and barges, a blockage of principal ports, including Haiphong, and even an invasion of North Vietnam.

The aim of this approach would be to convince Hanoi that it would be wise to make concessions in Paris to end the war rather than risk a much tougher war.

To add credibility to this tack, one or more new army divisions could be formed with the implicit threat that they might be headed for Vietnam.

Well-placed sources say that Dr. Kissinger has been so busy recruiting talent for his own office and others in the Nixon Administration that he has not yet had much time to grapple with the Vietnam policy review

71,978 GI's Visit Australia

Canberra, Australia, Jan. 10 — United States servicemen from Vietnam have spent \$18,700,000 in Australia since the rest and recreation leave program started in October, 1967, United States Ambassador William H. Crook said today. Mr. Crook said in a statement 71,978 United States soldiers have visited Australia.

REBELS RULE ONLY

12% NOW...Continued

59.8 per cent, the report said.

Hanoi's Claims

By contrast, a Radio Hanoi broadcast claimed the Viet Cong had established "people's revolutionary committees" with control over two-thirds of South Vietnam's area and nearly three-fourths of the people.

Field reports told of numerous small skirmishes today following up the heaviest wave of enemy shellings of airfields, army camps and district towns since the United States halted the bombing of North Vietnam November 1.

A Viet Cong force of undetermined size overran an American squad—nine GI's and two Tiger Scouts, former Viet Cong—posted to ambush duty in the Mekong Delta 30 miles southwest of Saigon. A spokesman said six Americans and one of the scouts was killed and all the others were wounded.

Distress Call Sent

The squad, from the 3rd Brigade, United States 9th Infantry Division, managed to radio a distress call. The enemy pulled out before reinforcements arrived.

Twenty-eight separate enemy shelling attacks overnight were centered on outposts and towns in the thickly populated Mekong Delta south of Saigon and on American and South Vietnamese camps guarding northwestern approaches to the capital.

This burst of offensive effort led to speculation that the Communist command had ordered military pressure increased to underline Hanoi's displeasure at the deadlock in the Paris peace talks.

Spokesmen said the death toll was light. But more than 100 South Vietnamese and a lesser number of Americans were reported wounded. Ten helicopters were damaged by the explosion of mortar shells and rockets at Dong Tam, a 9th Infantry Division base 40 miles southwest of Saigon.

that Nixon officials announced a few weeks ago.

"When he finally does settle down behind his desk," said one official, "he'll find that even without asking he's got a large stack of suggestions with which to begin."

ing the Pueblo crewmen, said at the news conference. "His emotional condition is now good. The psychiatrists released him for intelligence debriefings some time ago. He's responding certainly normally."

Commander Kaufman said that the 41-year-old skipper had apparently lost 100 pounds after his third month in captivity. His weight before captivity was 210. Upon his release, however, Commander Bucher's weight had climbed to 165 pounds.

"All the men were suffering from malnutrition," said the pudgy dark-haired 39-year-old doctor. "We were somewhat surprised at the relative physical well-being of the men medically, compared to what we expected prisoners of war to show."

"From our talks with the men," he continued, "we have deduced that their diet in captivity was about 2,000 to 2,200 calories a day, but low in proteins and vitamins. It was obvious, however, that all of the men did not consume all of the food offered them, as many found it unpalatable."

Captain Thomas and Commander Kaufman said that the Navy, for medical reasons, was extending the period of service three months for the 25 Pueblo crewmen whose enlistments have expired. The extension can be rejected by any crewman who signs a waiver of naval medical benefits as well as claims against the Government.

"It's highly desirable to medically follow these people closely for an additional period of time to insure that there is no recurrence of previous symptoms," Commander Kaufman said. "There are people we're treating who have eye problems, foot drops, and peripheral neuropathy [a burning and pain in the hands and lower extremities]. It's all due to vitamin deficiencies. These people must be followed closely."

"This [extension] is really for their own benefit," he said. Navy officers said that "about two" of the 25 enlisted men had indicated disagreement with the extension and would probably sign a waiver and obtain a discharge.

The Navy said that the extension for the enlisted men was unrelated to the impending court of inquiry—in which some enlisted men are expected to be called. All the Pueblo crewmen are on "limited duty status" and have been ordered to remain in the San Diego area, apparently until the court of inquiry ends.

Since the court of inquiry has subpoena powers, any crewman who is discharged from the Navy can be called to testify.

The court was called by the United States Pacific fleet commander, Adm. John J. Hyland, to "inquire into all the facts and circumstances" involving the capture of the ship and the subsequent imprisonment in North Korea of the Pueblo crewmen.

Such questions as the surrender of the Pueblo, apparently without a fight, and the confessions, are expected to be the focus of the court of inquiry.

THE WAR

Conflicting Advice

He who is not sage and wise, humane and just, cannot use secret agents. And he who is not delicate and subtle cannot get the truth out of them.

— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

On the battlefield in Viet Nam and at the peace talks in Paris, the counsel of U.S. intelligence analysts weighs heavily. For it is as true today as it was around 400 B.C., when Sun Tzu wrote China's oldest manual of arms, that those whose trade is to uncover an enemy's secrets "receive their instructions within the tent of the general and are intimate and close to him." Yet when Richard Nixon becomes Commander in Chief, he will need an extraordinary measure of sagacity, wisdom, humanity and justice—not to mention delicacy and subtlety—to discern the truth in the reports prepared for him by Washington's intelligence operatives. As Inauguration Day approaches, the capital's cloak-and-dagger community is bickering furiously over Viet Nam.

Each group is preparing to offer conflicting advice to the new President. "Within a few weeks," an official predicts, "there is going to be one hell of a battle." At stake in what some observers call the War for Nixon's Ear is the direction the President-elect will take in his search for peace.

One group of analysts is convinced that the Communists, bloodied by 180,000 battlefield deaths so far this year, have battered themselves to the brink of impotence. If this reading is accurate, concessions can be wrung from Communist negotiators in Paris through astute haggling, reinforced by military muscle against a weakened Viet Cong.

But if a second group is right, no amount of tough talk is likely to budge Hanoi. While the pessimists concede that the enemy has been hurt, they insist that he still has plenty of fight left, with the will and capability for a prolonged struggle. The most drastic division of opinion concerns the part-time guerrillas known as hamlet guards. Pessimists set their strength at 250,000; optimists contend that they are not effective troops and should not be counted at all.

Optimism and Gloom. The intelligence quandary would be easier for Nixon to unsnarl if each segment of Government argued with one voice—with, say, the State Department citing political considerations to counterpoint the military contentions of the Pentagon. That has been known to happen. In 1963, after listening to conflicting reports from a general and a diplomat who had just returned from a joint mission to Viet Nam, President Kennedy was moved to inquire: "Have you two gentlemen been in the same country?"

Unfortunately, this time the Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department are all split themselves. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research wears a gloomy mien that irks Secretary of State Dean Rusk and the optimistic deskmen of the East Asian bureau. In the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Intelligence Agency are assembling a rosy picture of a seriously weakened enemy and a greatly improved South Vietnamese military machine, a vision shared by U.S. Commander General Creighton Abrams and his headquarters in Saigon. But the Defense Department's civilian-dominated Bureau of International Security Affairs is far more skeptical.

At CIA headquarters, a number of intelligence evaluators disagree with the optimists who report directly to Director Richard Helms on Viet Nam. The CIA does, nevertheless, unite to take potshots at the DIA's overly hopeful judgments. The two intelligence agencies are in such sharp discord that when Lyndon Johnson recently ordered them to come up with a figure on the size of Communist forces, they were unable to comply.

Futile Talks. In both Paris and Viet Nam, Communist actions last week served to confound optimists and pessimists alike. In a swampy paddyfield 50 miles northwest of Saigon, five unarmed American officers faced Viet Cong envoys dressed in grubby khakis during a 24-hour Christmas Day truce. Their futile talks, lasting two hours and 22 minutes, were supposed to deal with the release of three G.I.s. The Communists, who met with the Americans beneath a Viet Cong flag, seemed principally concerned with obtaining some form of U.S. recognition of the National Liberation Front, the political arm

of the Viet Cong. The American prisoners remained in captivity after it was all over. The Viet Cong want another meeting in the same paddy at 9 a.m. on New Year's Day.

In Paris, negotiators from Hanoi and the N.L.F. seemed to be moving away from their previously intransigent insistence that the regime of South Viet Nam's President Nguyen Van Thieu must go. "If the [Saigon] Administration does not change its policy," declared N.L.F. Spokesman Tran Hoai Nam, "it will be overthrown by the people." The implication was that Thieu's government might be an acceptable negotiating partner if it softened its equally stubborn nonrecognition of the N.L.F.

There were signs that Saigon was moving in the same direction. South Viet Nam's flamboyant Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, in a TV interview in Paris, stated that the Saigon regime might sit down with the N.L.F. to work out South Viet Nam's political future once Washington and Hanoi begin negotiations on withdrawing U.S. and North Vietnamese troops from the war zone. The new line was closely attuned to the views of Henry Kissinger, Nixon's White House Assistant for National Security Affairs, who believes that a two-track parley—involving parallel talks between the U.S. and North Viet Nam and between South Viet Nam and the guerrillas—may prove the quickest route to peace.

Table Talk. U.S. intelligence agencies, as usual, were at loggerheads with one another over the significance of the latest ever so slight shifts by both sides. The conferees in Paris remained at loggerheads too over the shape of the negotiating table around which they are to sit. That point has deadlocked the peace parley for almost two months, and last week the Communists announced that there would be no negotiations unless all parties sat down at a round table. Saigon has balked at such an arrangement, because it would accord equal status to the guerrillas. Thus the squabble over the shape of the table—or tables—remained as far as ever from resolution. "It is likely," sighed one exasperated letter writer to the New York Times, "that the next winner of the Nobel Peace Prize will be a furniture designer."